

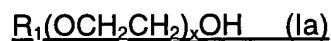
In the Claims

1. (original) A wettable polyolefin fiber or filament, comprising a melt blend

which comprises

(a) a polyolefin; and

(b) at least one compound of the formula (Ia)~~(I)~~



where x is 2 to 10 and

wherein

~~R₁ is a straight or branched chain alkyl of 22 to 40 carbon atoms and the hydrophilic oligomer is a homo- or co-oligomer consisting of monomer units derived from monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylene oxide, propylene oxide, ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, epichlorhydrin, acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, ethylene imine, caprolactone, vinyl alcohol and vinyl acetate;~~

~~and wherein the hydrophilic oligomer consists of between 2 and 10 monomer units.~~

2. (original) A fiber or filament according to claim 1 in which the polyolefin is polypropylene or polyethylene.

3-6. (canceled)

7. (original) A fiber or filament according to claim 1 wherein the compounds of component (b), in total, are present from about 0.1 % to about 15 % by weight, based on the weight of the polyolefin of component (a).

8. (original) A fiber or filament according to claim 7 wherein the compounds of component (b), in total, are present from about 1 % to about 7 % by weight, based on the weight of the polyolefin of component (a).

9. (original) A bi-component fiber comprising a polyolefin component, wherein the polyolefin component comprises a melt blend comprising components (a) and (b) according to claim 1.

10. (previously presented) A woven or nonwoven fabric comprising polyolefin fibers or filaments according to claim 1.

11. (original) A woven or nonwoven fabric according to claim 10 wherein the polyolefin is polypropylene or polyethylene.

12. (previously presented) A woven or nonwoven fabric comprising bi-component fibers according to claim 9.

13-16. (canceled)

17. (original) An article of manufacture comprising a woven or nonwoven fabric according to claim 10 selected from the group consisting of disposable diapers, training pants, feminine napkins,

tampons, incontinence care products, wet and dry wipes, wound dressings, surgical capes, filter media and battery separators.

18. (currently amended) A fiber or filament according to claim **1** in which the melt blend additionally comprises an ethoxylated aliphatic alcohol that is not of formula (Ia)~~(I)~~.

19. (original) A fiber or filament according to claim **1** in which the melt blend additionally comprises a 2 mole ethoxylated stearyl alcohol.

20-21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) A fiber or filament according to claim **1**~~[[3]]~~ in which R₁ is a straight or branched chain alkyl of 28, 30 or 32 carbon atoms and x is 2 or 3.

23. (currently amended) A fiber or filament according to claim **22** in which the melt blend additionally comprises an ethoxylated aliphatic alcohol that is not of formula (Ia)~~(I)~~.

24. (previously presented) A fiber or filament according to claim **22** in which the melt blend additionally comprises a 2 mole ethoxylated stearyl alcohol.